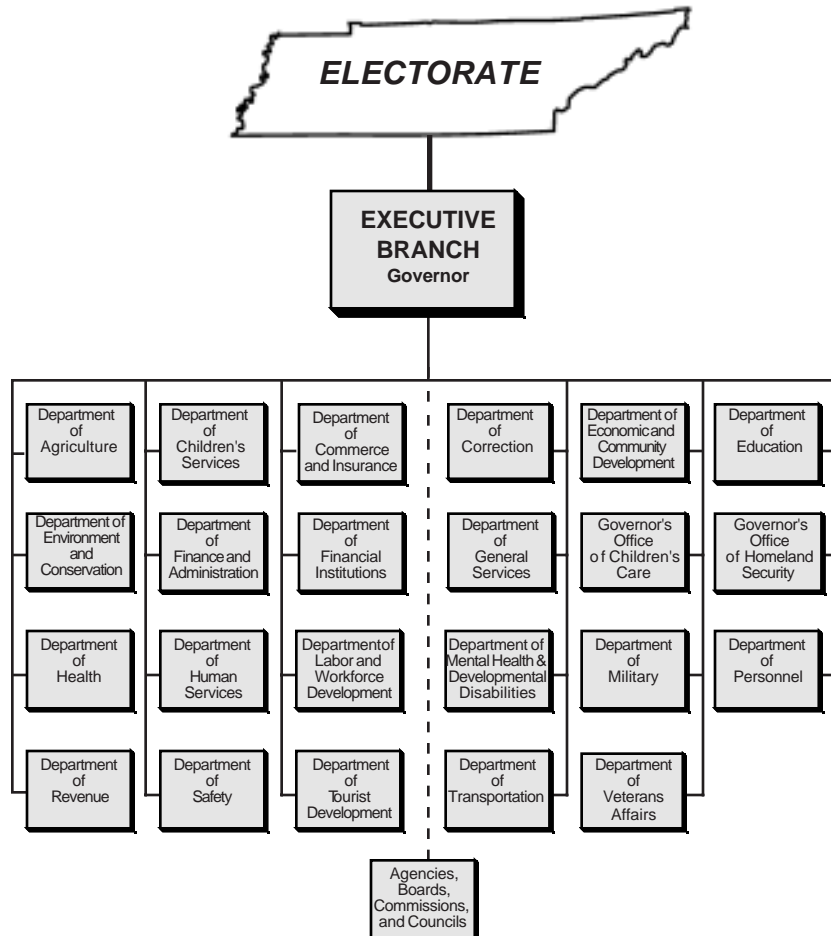


SECTION II



Executive Branch



INTRODUCTION

When you think of “state government” in Tennessee, many different images may come to mind. You may think of the state highway near your home, or the state park your family is planning to visit, or one of the state colleges or universities. State government delivers many different kinds of services and touches our lives in many ways.

The following pages describe the major departments and agencies that make up the executive branch of state government in Tennessee. These administrative components of the government are run by the governor and his appointees.

The state constitution divides the powers of the total state government into three distinct branches—the legislative, the executive and the judicial. The legislative authority of the state is vested in a General Assembly, and the judicial power of the state is vested in a Supreme Court and a system of other courts established by the Legislature.

In the case of the executive branch, the constitution places the “Supreme Executive Power” of the state with the governor. “Executive” means empowered to administer or to carry out certain duties or functions. While the General Assembly enacts laws and creates new programs by statute and the courts interpret those laws, the governor and his executive branch agencies “execute” or administer those laws and carry out the programs they mandate.

The executive branch of state government delivers a wide range of services to the people of Tennessee. To do that effectively and as efficiently as possible, it employs more than 39,000 people in twenty-four Cabinet-level departments and other agencies.

On the following pages you will see how such a large organization fits together. You will also find addresses and phone numbers for the agencies and programs with services about which you may want to learn more.